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TO: Each Supervisor

FROM: James A. Noyes
Director of Public Works

**BOARD AGENDA ITEM 1, JUNE 25, 2002
ANNUAL GARBAGE COLLECTION AND DISPOSAL SERVICE FEE
FOR FISCAL YEAR 2002-03
BELVEDERE GARBAGE DISPOSAL DISTRICT (SUPERVISORIAL DISTRICT 1)**

Board Agenda Item 1 concerns the public hearing scheduled for June 25, 2002, to solicit comments on the proposed increase in the District's annual Service Fee from the current \$75 (\$6.25 monthly) per refuse unit to \$108 (\$9 monthly) per refuse unit commencing Fiscal Year 2002-03. I am recommending that upon conclusion of the public hearing, your Board adopt the proposed County Ordinance amending Chapter 20.90 of the Los Angeles County Code for the above fee increase.

The Service Fee was established in 1980 to supplement diminishing property taxes (ad valorem). The Service Fee currently provides a major portion of the needed funds to provide for refuse collection, recycling, and green waste services. The single-family Service Fee is equivalent to one "refuse unit." Multiple residential and certain commercial and industrial parcels are assigned multiple refuse units based on each parcel's Assessor Land Use Code, and, therefore, the Service Fee charged to such parcels is a greater amount.

Currently, the District provides manual refuse collection services to the residents. However, commencing July 1, 2002, all the District's residents will be receiving automated garbage collection services. Starting June 3, the District's new contractor, Consolidated Disposal Service, began delivering a 96-gallon container for refuse and two 64-gallon containers, one each for recycling and green waste, to each residence in the District. The automated system, while enhancing the community's appearance, will also help the County's efforts to ensure compliance with State waste reduction mandates.

During the last several years, the District has maintained the Service Fee at the existing rate by using the District's reserves. However, an increase in the District's existing Service Fee becomes imperative due to 1) depletion of the reserves, 2) higher landfill disposal fees, 3) implementation of the new automated collection services, and 4) increase in fuel costs. Our survey indicates that at \$9 a month for a single-family residence, the proposed Service Fee remains the lowest among those charged by neighboring cities and communities for similar services.

To address the need for a rate increase and for providing information on the automated collection services, my staff, in concert with Supervisorial District 1 and Consolidated Disposal Service, conducted six community meetings in the month of May. These meetings were conducted during the day as well as in the evening on weekdays and weekends. Residents were notified of the dates and times of the meetings by a letter distributed by U.S. mail. Over 400 residents participated at these meetings and the majority of those in attendance were in support of the new program. Some of the residents attending had questions about refuse container size, street parking, and the need to develop a revised schedule for street sweeping to occur following the refuse collection days.

The concerns expressed by some residents are similar to those raised in other communities converting from manual to automated services and were anticipated. Our contract specifically requires the contractor to provide customized services in certain situations on a case-by-case basis. Accordingly, we are addressing each issue as it is raised. For example, we have taken measures to provide those residents with a need for smaller containers and have met with the Sheriff's Department to discuss enforcement of no parking requirements on refuse collection days. We are also coordinating efforts with our existing street sweeping contractor to revise the street sweeping schedule where possible. In addition, we are developing programs for utilization in our new street sweeping contracts, which would require coordination with the refuse collection contracts.

As required by State law (Proposition 218 – 1996), notification for the June 25 public hearing was mailed to property owners in the District on May 7 and 8, 2002. In addition, the legal notices for the public hearing were published in the Belvedere Citizen on May 8 and 15, 2002, and La Opinion on May 3 and 10, 2002. As of this date, we have received only two written protests from among the approximately 19,000 parcels in the District. In addition, we received over 1,950 telephone inquiries from the property owners and/or the residents. A significant majority of calls were in regard to the operational aspects of the new automated collection services, and less than three percent had questions on the proposed service fee increase.

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cc: Chief Administrative Office, County Counsel, Executive Office